

and Beyond in a Brave New World, describes the circumstances under which a human might opt for cloning and maintains that human cloning does not threaten society. Its style incorporates narrative, philosophical, and political features that sharpen its questions. Written in response to an experiment in which scientists cloned human cells, John J. Conley's "Narcissus Cloned" argues that cloning human embryos violates the sanctity of human life and undermines human relationships. Its style pursues a speculative philosophical line of reasoning. Charles Krauthammer argues that cloning should not be used in attempts to remove genetic defects from human embryos in his article "Crossing Lines: A Secular Argument Against Research Cloning." His style follows a question-and-answer model that appeals to a broad audience.

Lori Andrews and Dorothy Nelkin's "The Business of Bodies" offers an academic approach as it explores social and legal issues relating to biotechnology. It incorporates several academic footnotes that cut across the fields of sociology, law, and scientific research. Ian Wilmut concludes the conversation with his essay on "The Moral Imperative for Cloning." Though a research specialist who pioneered in the development of animal cloning, Wilmut undertakes an ethical argument that cites opposing arguments and acknowledges partial concessions to them.



Jennifer and Rachel

Lee M. Silver

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PREREADING

What have you previously read or seen in the news concerning cloning? Brainstorm a list of specifics. Now read through your list. Based on the items in your list, would you say the news media present cloning in a positive, negative, or objective light? Do they sensationalize cloning, or do they provide balanced reporting?

Jennifer is a self-sufficient single woman who lives by herself in a stylish apartment on Manhattan's Upper West Side. She has focused almost all her energies on her career since graduating from Columbia University, fourteen years earlier, and has moved steadily upward in the business world. In financial terms, she is now quite well

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off. In social terms, she is happy being single. Jennifer has had various relationships with men over the years, but none was serious enough to make her consider giving up her single lifestyle.

And then on April 14, 2049, the morning of her thirty-fifth birthday, Jennifer wakes up alone, in her quiet room, before the break of dawn, before her alarm is set to go off, and she begins to wonder. With her new age—thirty-five—bouncing around in her mind, a single thought comes to the fore. “It’s getting late,” she tells herself.

It is not marriage or a permanent relationship that she feels is missing, it is something else. It is a child. Not any child, but a child of her own to hold and to love, to watch and to nurture. Jennifer knows that she can afford to raise a child by herself, and she also knows that the firm she works for is generous in giving women the flexibility required to maintain both a family and a career. And now she feels, for the first time, that she will soon be too old to begin motherhood.

Jennifer is a decisive woman, and by the end of that day she decides to become a single mother. It is the same positive decision that hundreds of thousands of other women have made before her. But unlike twentieth-century women, Jennifer knows there is no longer any reason to incorporate a sperm donor into the process. An anonymous sperm cell could introduce all sorts of unknown, undesirable traits into her child, and Jennifer is not one to gamble. Instead, she makes the decision to use one of her own cells to create a new life.

Jennifer is well aware that federal law makes cloning illegal in the United States except in cases of untreatable infertility. She realizes that she could get around the law through a marriage of convenience with a gay friend, who would then be declared infertile by a sympathetic physician. But she decides to do what increasing numbers of other women in her situation have done recently—take an extended vacation in the Cayman Islands.

On Grand Cayman Island, there is a large reproductively specialized clinic that specializes in cloning. The young physicians and biologists who work at this clinic do not ask questions of their clients. They will retrieve cells from any willing adult, prepare those cells for fusion to unfertilized eggs recovered from any willing woman, and then introduce the embryos that develop successfully into the uterus of the same, or another, willing woman. The cost of the procedure is \$80,000 for the initial cell cloning and embryo transfer, and \$20,000 for each subsequent attempt at pregnancy if earlier embryos fail to implant. When the clinic first opened, the fees were twice as high, but they dropped in response to competition from newly opened clinics in Jamaica and Grenada.

Since Jennifer is a healthy fertile woman, she has no need for other biological participants in the cloning process. A dozen unfertilized eggs are recovered from her ovaries and made nucleus-free. One-by-one, each is fused with a donor cell obtained from the inside of her mouth. After a period of incubation, healthy-looking embryos are observed under a microscope, and two of these are introduced into her uterus at the proper time of her menstrual cycle. (The introduction of two embryos increases the probability of a successful implantation.) After the procedure, Jennifer stays on the island three more days to rest, then flies back to New York.

A week later, Jennifer is thrilled by the positive blue + symbol that appears on her home pregnancy test. She waits another two weeks to confirm that the pregnancy has taken with another test, and then schedules an appointment with Dr. Steven Glassman, her gynecologist and obstetrician. Dr. Glassman knows that Jennifer is a single woman, and he doesn’t ask—and Jennifer doesn’t tell—how her pregnancy began. The following

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Dr. Callahan might argue that Rachel is harmed by the knowledge of her future condition. He might say that it is unfair for Rachel to go through her childhood knowing what she will look like as an adult, or being forced to consider future medical ailments that might befall her. But even in the absence of cloning, many children have some sense of the future possibilities encoded in the genes they got from their parents. In my own case, I knew as a teenager that I had a good chance of inheriting the pattern baldness that my maternal grandfather expressed so thoroughly. Furthermore, genetic screening already provides people with the ability to learn about hundreds of disease predispositions. And as genetic knowledge and technology become more and more sophisticated, it will become possible for any human being to learn even more about their genetic future than Rachel can learn from Jennifer's past. In American society, it is generally accepted that parents are ultimately responsible for deciding what their children should, or should not, be exposed to. And there's no reason to expect that someone like Jennifer would tell Rachel something that was not in her best interest to know.

Just because Rachel has the same genes as Jennifer does not mean that her life will turn out the same way. On the contrary, Rachel is sure to have a different upbringing in a world that has changed significantly since her mother's time. And there is no reason why she can't chart her own unique path through life. Furthermore, when it comes to genetic predispositions, they are just that and nothing more. Although their genetically determined inclinations may be the same, mother and daughter may choose to follow those inclinations in different ways, or not at all.

It might also be argued that Rachel is harmed by having to live up to the unrealistic expectations that her mother will place on her. But there is no reason to believe that Jennifer's expectations will be any more unreasonable than those of many other parents who expect their children to accomplish in their lives what the parents were unable to accomplish in their own. No one would argue that parents with such tendencies should be prohibited from having children. Besides, there's no reason to assume that Jennifer's expectations will be unreasonable. Indeed, there is every reason to believe Rachel will be loved by her mother no matter what she chooses to do, as most mothers love their children.

But let's grant that among the many Rachels brought into this world, some will feel bad that their genetic constitution is not unique. Is this alone a strong enough reason to ban the practice of cloning? Before answering this question, ask yourself another: Is a child having knowledge of an older twin worse off than a child born into poverty? If we ban the former, shouldn't we ban the latter? Why is it that so many politicians seem to care so much about cloning but so little about the welfare of children in general?

Some object to cloning because of the process that it entails. The view of the Vatican, in particular, is that human embryos should be treated like human beings and should not be tampered with in any way. However, the cloning protocol does not tamper with embryos, it tampers only with *unfertilized* eggs and adult cells like those we scratch off our arms without a second thought. Only after the fact does an embryo emerge (which could be treated with the utmost respect if one so chooses).

There is a sense among some who are religious that cloning leaves God out of the process of human creation, and that man is venturing into places he does not belong. This same concern has been, and will continue to be, raised as each new reprogenetic technology is incorporated into our culture, from in vitro fertilization twenty years ago to genetic engineering of embryos—sure to happen in the near future. It is impossible to counter this theological claim with scientific arguments. . . .

eight and a half months pass by uneventfully, with monthly, then weekly, visits to the doctor's office. Ultrasound indicates the presence of a single normal fetus, and amniocentesis confirms the absence of any known genetic problem. Finally, on March 15, 2050, a baby girl is born. Jennifer names her Rachel. To the nurses and doctors who work in the delivery room, Rachel is one more newborn baby, just like all the other newborn babies they've seen in their lives.

Jennifer, holding Rachel in her arms, is taken to a room in the maternity ward, and shortly thereafter, the nurse on duty brings by the form to fill out for the birth certificate. Without a word, she enters Jennifer's name into the space for "the mother." She then asks Jennifer for the name of the father. "Unknown," Jennifer replies, and this is duly recorded. A day later, Jennifer is released from the hospital with her new baby girl.

Rachel will grow up in the same way as all other children her age. Occasionally, people will comment on the striking similarity that exists between the child and her mother. Jennifer will smile at them and say, "Yes. She does have my facial features." And she'll leave it at that.

From time to time, Jennifer will let Rachel know that she is a "special" child, without going into further detail. Then one day, when her daughter has grown old enough to understand, Jennifer will reveal the truth. And just like other children conceived with the help of reprogenetic protocols, Rachel will feel . . . special. Some day in the more distant future, when cloning becomes just another means of alternative reproduction, accepted by society, the need for secrecy will disappear.

Who is Rachel, and who really are her parents? There is no question that Jennifer is Rachel's birth mother, since Rachel was born out of her body. But, Jennifer is not Rachel's genetic mother, based on the traditional meanings of mother and father. In genetic terms, Jennifer and Rachel are twin sisters. As a result, Rachel will constantly behold a glimpse of her future simply by looking at her mother's photo album and her mother herself. She will also understand that her single set of grandparents are actually her genetic parents as well. And when Rachel grows up and has children of her own, her children will also be her mother's children. Thus, with a single act of cloning, we are forced to reconsider the meaning of parents, children, and siblings, and how they relate to one another.

Is Cloning Wrong?

Is there anything wrong with what Jennifer has done? The most logical way to approach this question is through a consideration of whether anyone, or anything, has been harmed by the birth of Rachel. Clearly no harm has been done to Jennifer. She got the baby girl she wanted and she will raise her with the same sorts of hopes and aspirations that most normal parents have for their children.

But what about Rachel? Has she been harmed in some way so detrimental that it would have been better had she not been born? Daniel Callahan, the Director of the Hastings Center (a bioethics think tank near New York City), argues that "engineering someone's entire genetic makeup would compromise his or her right to a unique identity." But no such "right" has been granted by nature—identical twins are born every day as natural clones of each other. Dr. Callahan would have to concede this fact, but he might still argue that just because twins occur naturally does not mean we should create them on purpose.

Finally, there are those who argue against cloning based on the perception that it will harm society at large in some way. The *New York Times* columnist William Safire expresses the opinion of many others when he says, "Cloning's identity would restrict evolution." This is bad, he argues, because "the continued interplay of genes . . . is central to humankind's progress." But Mr. Safire is wrong on both practical and theoretical grounds. On practical grounds, even if human cloning became efficient, legal, and popular among those in the moneyed classes (which is itself highly unlikely), it would still only account for a fraction of a percent of all the children born onto this earth. Furthermore, each of the children born by cloning to different families would be different from one another, so where does the identity come from?

On theoretical grounds, Safire is wrong because humankind's progress has nothing to do with unfettered evolution, which is always unpredictable and not necessarily upward bound. H. G. Wells recognized this principle in his 1895 novel *The Time Machine*, which portrays the natural evolution of humankind into weak and dimwitted, but cuddly little creatures. And Kurt Vonnegut follows this same theme in *Galápagos*, where he suggests that our "big brains" will be the cause of our downfall, and future humans with smaller brains and powerful flippers will be the only remnants of a once great species, a million years hence.

Although most politicians professed outrage at the prospect of human cloning when Dolly [the first cloned sheep] was first announced, Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa was the one lone voice in opposition. "What nonsense, what utter utter nonsense, to think that we can hold up our hands and say, 'Stop,'" Mr. Harkin said. "Human cloning will take place, and it will take place in my lifetime. I don't fear it at all. I welcome it."

As the story of Jennifer and Rachel is meant to suggest, those who want to clone themselves or their children will not be impeded by governmental laws or regulations. The marketplace—not government or society—will control cloning. And if cloning is banned in one place, it will be made available somewhere else—perhaps on an underdeveloped island country happy to receive the tax revenue. Indeed, within two weeks of Dolly's announcement, a group of investors formed a Bahamas-based company called Clonaid (under the direction of a French scientist named Dr. Brigitte Boisselier) with the intention of building a clinic where cloning services would be offered to individuals for a fee of \$200,000. According to the description provided on their Web page (<<http://www.clonaid.com>>), they plan to offer "a fantastic opportunity to parents with fertility problems or homosexual couples to have a child cloned from one of them."

Irrespective of whether this particular venture actually succeeds, others will certainly follow. For in the end, international borders can do little to impede the reproductive practices of couples and individuals.

Surreptitious Cloning

In democratic societies, people have the right to reproduce and the right to *not* reproduce. This last "right" means that men and women cannot be forced to conceive a child against their will. Until now, it has been possible to exercise this particular right by choosing not to engage in sexual intercourse, and not to provide sperm or eggs for use in artificial insemination or IVF [in vitro fertilization]. But suddenly, human cloning opens up frightening new vistas in the realm of reproductive choice, or lack thereof. Suddenly, it becomes possible to use the genetic material of others without their knowledge or consent.

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Let's reconsider the Jennifer and Rachel scenario in the light of reproductive 27
choice. At first glance, it might seem that nothing is amiss here because Jennifer obvi-
ously gave her consent to be cloned. But reproductive choice has been interpreted
traditionally to mean that people have the right not to be genetic parents against their
will. Does this mean that Jennifer should have asked her own parents for permission to
create a clone—her identical twin and their child—before proceeding? Actually, all
of *your* genes, as well, came from *your* mother and father. Does this mean that your
parents have the right to tell you how to use them?

At least Jennifer gave her consent to be cloned. But what are we to make of a situ- 28
ation in which someone is cloned without his or her knowledge, let alone consent? It
takes only a single living cell to start the cloning procedure, and that cell can probably
be obtained from almost any living part of the human body. There are various ways in
which cells could be stolen from a person. I will illustrate one here with what I will call
the Michael Jordan scenario.

Let's move to the near future. The year is 2009, and Jordan has now retired as a 29
professional basketball player. He goes into his doctor's office for his annual checkup,
during which a blood sample is taken into a standard tube. Jordan's sample, along with
others, is given over to a medical technician, who has been waiting for this moment
since Jordan scheduled his appointment a month before. After closing the lab door
behind her, she opens the tube of Jordan's blood and removes a tiny portion, which is
transferred to a fresh tube that is quickly hidden in her pocket. The original tube is
resealed, and no one will ever know that it has been tampered with.

At the start of her lunch break, the technician rushes the tube of blood to her 30
friend at a private IVF clinic on the other side of town. The small sample is emptied
into a laboratory dish, and there Jordan's white blood cells are bathed in nutrients and
factors that will allow them to grow and multiply into millions of identical cells, each
one ready for cloning. The cells are divided up into many portions, which are frozen in
individual tubes for later use.

And then the word goes out on the street. For a \$200,000 fee, you can have your 31
very own Michael Jordan child. Would anyone buy? If not a Michael Jordan child,
would they be interested in a Tom Cruise, a Bill Clinton, or a Madonna (the singer, not
the saint)?

It's important to understand that what most people want more than anything else 32
is to have their *own* child, not someone else's child, no matter who that someone else
might be. And if cloning someone else is an option, then cloning oneself is also an
option. So what possible reason could exist for choosing a genetically unrelated child?

Perhaps heartless mothers will want a clone of someone famous in the belief 33
that they will prosper on the income that a clone could make, or the fame that he
would bring. But it would require an enormous investment in time and money to raise a
child over many years before there was even a chance of a payback. Clones of Michael
Jordan would likely be born with the potential to become outstanding athletes, and
clones of Tom Cruise or Madonna might have the same artistic talent as their progeni-
tors. But the original Jordan, Cruise, and Madonna owe their success even more to
hard work than genetic potential.

Clones might not have the same incentive to train and exert themselves even 34
if—and perhaps because—unscrupulous parents and promoters try to force them in a
specified direction against their will. And while one Madonna clone might attract fame
and attention, the next dozen will almost certainly be ignored. It is hard to imagine that

many potential parents would be willing to take this gamble, with the wait being so long and the chances of success so small.

There will probably always be some infertile couples or individuals who will want to clone simply for the opportunity to raise a child who is likely to be beautiful or bright, without any desire to profit from the situation themselves. These people will be able to reach their reproductive goals by cloning someone—who is not famous—with their consent. In the future, cell donors could be chosen from a catalog in the same way that sperm and egg donors are chosen today.

In contrast, cloning surreptitiously will almost certainly be frowned upon even by those who accept other uses of the cloning technology. And those who participate will run the risk of serious litigation on the basis of infringing upon someone else's reproductive rights. This is not to say, however, that surreptitious cloning will never occur. On the contrary, if something becomes possible in our brave new reproductive world, someone will probably do it, somewhere, sometime.

READING FOR CONTENT

1. What factors led Jennifer to decide to have herself cloned?
2. Why must Jennifer travel to the Cayman Islands for the cloning procedure?
3. Paraphrase Silver's description of the cloning process that Jennifer undergoes.
4. What is the biological relationship between Jennifer and Rachel? Between Rachel and Jennifer's parents?
5. In what ways will Rachel's and Jennifer's lives differ, even though the two individuals are genetically identical?
6. What might be the motive for "surreptitious cloning"?
7. Why does Silver think that relatively few people will want to raise clones of famous, talented individuals?

READING FOR GENRE, ORGANIZATION, AND STYLISTIC FEATURES

1. Why does Silver begin his piece with an extended scenario?
2. Where does Silver respond to the views of those who oppose human cloning? Is that response successful?
3. Why does Silver choose to discuss "surreptitious cloning" at the end of the piece?
4. Would you characterize this as a piece of academic writing? Why, or why not? What types of sources and authorities does Silver cite?

READING FOR RHETORICAL CONTEXT

1. How do Silver's credentials affect your reading of his essay?
2. What assumptions does Silver make about the general public's response to cloning? Why has he written this piece, and what is his attitude toward his readers?
3. What is Silver's rhetorical purpose? What does he want to get across to his readers?
4. Where does Silver indicate his own attitude toward Jennifer's use of cloning technology?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. In a 500-word essay, summarize the potential benefits and dangers of human cloning that are discussed in Silver's article. Write for an audience of nonscientists.
2. Write a 1,000-word essay that attacks or defends Silver's suggestion that Jennifer's decision to use cloning technology is reasonable.
3. Using Silver's article as a springboard, discuss the extent to which various segments of our society (scientists, the general public, elected officials, and so forth) should be involved in decisions about human cloning. Write at least 1,000 words.



Narcissus Cloned

John J. Conley

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PREREADING

Is human cloning immoral? Explain your answer in ten minutes of freewriting.

The recent experiment in human cloning in Washington, D.C., has provoked 1
moral unease in the public. Both specialists and laypersons sense that this new technology is fraught with ethical and political peril. The discussion of the ethics of human cloning, however, rarely moves from intuitive praise and blame to careful analysis of the moral values—more frankly, the disvalues—presented by this practice. The discussion also reveals the moral impoverishment of our culture's categories for dealing with biotechnological challenges because the key ethical issues are often obscured by a bland subjectivism that reduces moral values to the simple desire of the parent or researcher.

Here I will sketch out the moral debits of the practice of cloning and criticize the 2
narrow types of moral reasoning that have prevented our society from collectively facing the incipient ethical and political dangers in this practice.

First, human cloning violates respect for the life of each human being, which is 3
due from the moment of conception. While empirical science as such cannot determine the nature and extension of the person, it is indisputable that conception marks the radical beginning of the personal history of each human being. Many of the physical characteristics that clearly influence our interpersonal relations, such as gender, height and somatic constitution, are clearly shaped in the moment of conception. Contemporary

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Third, the practice of cloning undermines the integrity of human love. Human beings, until quite recently, have usually been conceived in the conjugal embrace of their parents. In marital intercourse, the two values of union between the spouses and the procreation of the family's children remain indissoluble. It is the same act unifying the couple and bringing forth the nascent child. Cloning, however, stands to radicalize the divorce between conjugal union and procreation already introduced by in vitro fertilization. A third person, the scientist in the laboratory, invades the once-intimate drama of the generation of children.

I have long been haunted by the remark of Louise Brown, the first child successfully conceived in vitro, when the doctor who had artificially conceived her died. Louise was plunged into grief. She told the press: "I feel that I have lost the person who made me"—as if the role once reserved to God and parent had now passed to the scientist in the white coat. The ancient setting of procreation, the sacramental embrace of spouses, is abandoned in favor of the fertile/sterile laboratory.

The initial experiment in human cloning indicates how radically procreation has been divorced from conjugal union. The sperm and egg, provided by anonymous donors, were deliberately fused to fabricate a human embryo that would deteriorate within several days. It is true that in the future married couples struggling with infertility might resort to cloning technology. Even in this case, however, the wedge between unitive and procreative values remains. The intimate union between the conjugal gift of love and life remains severed.

The language employed by journalists to describe these new means of generation also indicates the sea change wrought by cloning and related techniques. "Procreation" becomes "reproduction." "The glimmer in my parents' eyes" becomes "the product of conception." "The act of love" becomes "reproductive technology." The reduction of the child, once the immediate evidence of romance, to a product of the laboratory suggests the assault on the integrity of human love implicit in this practice.

Cloning's infringements on the basic goods of life, love, and otherness ultimately challenge human dignity itself. Immanuel Kant argues that human dignity entails the recognition that other human beings are ends in themselves, worthy of respect, rather than means to the ends of individual persons or society as a whole. Widespread cloning, however, would radically reduce humans to a eugenic mean. The human embryo would lose all claim to moral respect and legal protection by serving as an object of scientific curiosity or as an aid, easily discarded, to human fertility. In such a eugenic regime, human beings would increasingly be valued only for possessing certain socially desirable traits rather than for the simple fact that they exist as humans. By reducing the human person to an object stripped of intrinsic worth, routine cloning could threaten the ensemble of human rights itself.

The task of developing a moral response to the advent of human cloning is rendered all the more problematic by the superficial debate our society is currently conducting on this issue. Whether on the editorial page of *The New York Times* or on Phil and Oprah's television screen, the discussion tends to obscure the key moral problems raised by this practice. Certain popular types of reasoning prevent, rather than assist, the careful debate we deserve on this issue.

One common approach is the Luddite condemnation of all genetic engineering. Jeremy Rifkin, the most visible critic of the cloning experiment, exemplifies this approach. This position argues that the moral and political risks of genetic engineering are so grave that we should simply censure and, where possible, ban all such technology.

genetic research continues to reveal how profoundly other more "spiritual" traits of the person, such as intelligence and emotive temperament, are molded by one's conceptive history. The insistence that respect for human life begin at the time of conception is not a sectarian doctrine. Until quite recently, it formed the keystone of medical ethics, as witnessed by the influential doctor's oath designed by the World Medical Association in the aftermath of World War II: "I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the moment of conception."

Current experimentation in human cloning deliberately conceives a human being for the sake of research and then designates this human embryo for destruction. It is true that this pre-embryo represents a human being in an extremely primitive state of development. Nonetheless, this minute being remains clearly human (it can belong to no other species), uniquely human (due to its singular corporeal occupation of space and time) and, if placed in the proper environment, a being with an internal capacity to develop the distinctly human faculties of intellect and will.

The fabrication and destruction of human embryos may appear a minor assault on life in a U.S. society numbed by 1.5 million abortions a year and Dr. Jack Kevorkian's house calls. The acid test of whether we corporately esteem human life, however, is not found primarily in our treatment of powerful adults. Rather, it emerges in our treatment of the vulnerable, like these fragile human beings at the dawn of gestation.

Second, the practice of cloning undermines one of the key values of social interaction: human diversity. Emmanuel Levinas, a contemporary French philosopher, argues that the central challenge in interpersonal contact is accepting the other person precisely as other, as something more than the mirror image of oneself. One of the oddest of the recent arguments in favor of human cloning went something like this: Child-bearing will be easier for the parents if they can raise siblings hatched from the same egg, since the parents will always be dealing with children having the identical genetic code. (We could even save on the clothing bills.) It is hard to see how the family will benefit from becoming a hall of mirrors. The moral apprenticeship of family life consists precisely in the recognition of differences among siblings and the parents' recognition that their children are not simply the projection of their plans and wishes.

The possible reduction of human difference in a regime of routine cloning raises troubling political issues. Just who or what will constitute the model for the clonable human? Which race? Which physical composition? Which emotional temperament? Which kind of intelligence and at what level? The development of earlier biotechnologies, such as amniocentesis and eugenic abortion, has already begun to homogenize the human population.

Several sources indicate that up to 90 percent of fetuses with Down's Syndrome are currently aborted in the United States. The tendency to eliminate those ticketed as "disabled" contradicts the gains of the disability rights movement, which correctly urges us to respect and include those who are different because of physical or mental anomalies. Certain enthusiasts for cloning appear to dream Narcissus-like of a uniform humanity created in their own idealized image, an amalgam of Einstein and the Marlboro Man. Our aesthetic values, which focus so frequently on the unique timbre of a human voice or the difference between two human faces, would fade in such a monochlor regime. One can only marvel at the moral dexterity of our generation, which valiantly defends everything from the whale to the snail-darter lest bio-diversity be lost, yet calmly greets our growing destruction of the human other through eugenic technology.

References to Pandora's Box, Frankenstein, and the Third Reich decorate this blanket condemnation of all scientific intervention into human gestation. Such a categorical critique of biotechnology refuses to discern the different moral values present in the quite varied operations of genetic technology. While human cloning quite clearly appears to distort basic human goods, other therapeutic interventions can legitimately heal infertility and help an individual struggling with a genetic malady. Moral panic cannot ground a nuanced discernment of these disparate technological interventions.

Another approach, frequently offered by the proponents of cloning, contends that the current experiments are simply "scientific research." Since they are just research, they should not be the object of moral critique. In other words, the Pope & Co. should chill out. This aura of value-free science seriously constricts the scope of the moral enterprise. The object of moral judgment is any human action, i.e., any act of human beings rooted in intellect and will. Moral scrutiny of scientific action is eminently justified inasmuch as such action is patently the result of rational deliberation and choice. The effort to sequester human cloning from ethical judgment, like the earlier attempt to "take morality and politics out of fetal tissue research," simply blinds us to the moral values at stake.

Perhaps the most common reasoning used to justify human cloning is the subjectivist approach. As the editors of *The New York Times* argued, the producers of the material for cloning—I presume they mean the parents—should be the only ones to decide how the product is to be used. A thousand callers on radio talk shows claimed that "Father (or mother) knows best" and that no one could judge the clients and doctors who resort to this practice. Several proponents piously argued that these researchers sincerely wanted to help infertile couples. Such noble motives exempted them from moral censure.

In such a subjectivist perspective, the only relevant moral value is the motive of the parties concerned, and the only virtue is unqualified tolerance for the desire of the scientist or the parent. Such subjectivism systematically averts its gaze from the action of cloning itself, and the question of whether or how this practice destroys human goods can never be raised. Moral scrutiny of this action is suffocated under a sentimental veil of compassion or, worse, under the steely curtain of private property rights.

The subjectivists legitimately highlight the psychological plight of infertile couples who desire to bear children. They suppress, however, the salient ethical issue of which means, under what conditions, can properly be used to remedy this problem of infertility. An ancient moral and legal tradition rightly censures the buying and selling of infants as a just solution. There is a growing moral consensus that the violent battles over legal custody, not to mention the destruction of surplus embryos, have revealed the moral disvalues of surrogate mothering. Sentimental appeals to the pain of infertile couples "open to life" easily mask the ethical dangers of technologies that attempt to remedy infertility by the calculated manipulation and destruction of human lives.

The accompanying political debate must squarely question whether this practice promotes or vitiates the common good. Conducting such a trenchant debate, however, is problematic in a society that increasingly perceives moral judgments as the arbitrary product of emotion or preference.

READING FOR CONTENT

1. What is Conley's opinion on the public debate over cloning humans?
2. When does Conley believe that life begins?
3. What is Conley's opinion on abortion? Where is that opinion indicated?